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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 106749

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/14/2034  
TAGS: [PINR](#) [GB](#)  
SUBJECT: (C) KUDOS AND FOLLOW-UP FOR REPORTING ON GABON'S  
ELECTION AND PRESIDENT-ELECT

REF: A. LIBREVILLE 000416  
[1](#)B. LIBREVILLE 000412  
[1](#)C. LIBREVILLE 000405  
[1](#)D. LIBREVILLE 000400  
[1](#)E. LIBREVILLE 000399  
[1](#)F. LIBREVILLE 000398  
[1](#)G. LIBREVILLE 000397  
[1](#)H. LIBREVILLE 000395  
[1](#)I. LIBREVILLE 000387  
[1](#)J. LIBREVILLE 000386  
[1](#)K. LIBREVILLE 000349  
[1](#)L. LIBREVILLE 000344  
[1](#)M. LIBREVILLE 000338  
[1](#)N. LIBREVILLE 000336  
[1](#)O. LIBREVILLE 000321

Classified By: MICHAEL P. OWENS, ACTING DIR, INR/OPS. REASON: 1.4(C).

[1](#)1. (C/NF) US EMBASSY LIBREVILLE HAS PROVIDED EXCELLENT REPORTING (SEE REFTELS) ON GABON'S PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION PROCESS, CANDIDATES, AND OUTCOME THAT HAS BEEN INVALUABLE TO WASHINGTON ANALYSTS WHO TRACKED THE ELECTION AND COMPLETED VARIOUS WRITTEN PRODUCTS AND BRIEFINGS, INCLUDING A LEADERSHIP PROFILE ON THE PRESIDENT-ELECT. AS TIME AND RESOURCES ALLOW, WE WOULD HIGHLY VALUE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON BONGO'S LEADERSHIP STYLE AND HOW IT IS EXPECTED TO AFFECT GOVERNMENT OF GABON (GOG)/GABONESE DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PDG) DECISIONMAKING. THIS INFORMATION WILL BE USED IN A LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENT GEARED TOWARD US POLICYMAKERS WHO WILL BE MEETING WITH BONGO. WE WOULD APPRECIATE POST,S ATTENTION TO THE QUESTIONS BELOW.

[1](#)A. (C) HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE BONGO'S PERSONALITY? WHAT VALUES/BELIEFS/BEHAVIORS DOES BONGO HOLD MOST DEARLY, AND RESPECT MOST IN OTHERS (I.E. TRUTHFULNESS, LOYALTY, RESPECTFULNESS, ETC)? WHAT CULTURAL NORMS/VALUES/RELIGIOUS BELIEFS/ETC. HAVE MOST INFLUENCED BONGO AS A PERSON AND AS A LEADER? ARE THERE ANY PAST OR PRESENT GABONESE, AFRICAN, OR WORLD LEADERS WHO HAVE INSPIRED BONGO OR SERVED AS STRONG ROLE MODELS IN HIS PERSONAL OR POLITICAL LIFE?

[1](#)B. (C) HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE BONGO'S MANAGEMENT STYLE (MORE OF AN "IDEA MAN" OR MORE OF A "MICROMANAGER")?

[1](#)C. (C) WHO ARE THE MEMBERS OF BONGO'S INNER CIRCLE, AND WHAT, IF ANY, CHARACTERISTICS DO THEY HAVE IN COMMON (POLITICAL BELIEFS, ETHNICITY, EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND, PERSONALITY TYPE, CHILDHOOD FRIENDS, A MIX, ETC.)? WHO ARE THE KEY MEMBERS OF THE "RENOVATORS" THAT HE HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH IN THE PAST, AND IS HE STILL MORE CLOSELY ALIGNED TO THIS GROUP, OR IS HE NOW MORE CLOSELY ALIGNED WITH OLD GUARD MEMBERS OF THE RULING PARTY? WHO MAKES UP HIS PERSONAL SECURITY DETAIL?

[1](#)D. (C) DOES BONGO BEHAVE DIFFERENTLY WHEN HE IS IN MEETINGS WITH LARGE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE HE DOES NOT KNOW WELL OR VIEWS AS RIVALS THAN HE DOES IN ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS WITH PEOPLE HE FEELS MORE COMFORTABLE WITH? DOES HIS BEHAVIOR CHANGE AS HE

GETS TO KNOW THE PERSON HE IS MEETING WITH BETTER (I.E. IS HE MORE COMFORTABLE THE MORE OFTEN HE MEETS WITH SOMEONE)?

1E. (C) HOW COMFORTABLE IS BONGO IN DEALING WITH THE PRESS? DOES HE READ FROM PREPARED STATEMENTS? DOES HE FEEL AT EASE ANSWERING QUESTIONS WITHOUT A SCRIPT? DOES HE GET NERVOUS BEFORE MEETINGS WITH LARGE GROUPS OR WITH THE PUBLIC/PRESS? DOES HE LIKE BEING IN THE SPOTLIGHT?

1F. (C) HOW DOES BONGO BEHAVE WHEN HE IS IN MEETINGS WITH FOREIGN ADVISERS WHEN HIS CLOSE ADVISERS ARE PRESENT? DOES HE TEND TO SPEAK ON EVERY ISSUE HIMSELF, OR DOES HE LET HIS ADVISERS SPEAK ON HIS BEHALF? HOW DOES BONGO BEHAVE WHEN HE IS NOT WITH ANY ADVISERS? DOES HE TEND TO SPEAK FREELY OR DOES HE FREEZE UP? ARE THERE ANY PARTICULAR SUBJECT AREAS THAT HE APPEARS EITHER PARTICULARLY COMFORTABLE OR PARTICULARLY UNCOMFORTABLE SPEAKING ABOUT (ECONOMICS, FOREIGN POLICY, HEALTH, EDUCATION, ETC)?

1G. (C) WHAT POLICY ISSUES DOES BONGO FEEL THE MOST PASSIONATE ABOUT AND WHY? WHAT ISSUES DOES HE PLAN TO FOCUS HIS DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY AGENDAS ON? HOW WILLING IS HE TO INCLUDE OPPOSITION MEMBERS OR RULING PARTY MEMBERS THAT OPTED TO RUN AGAINST HIM IN THE RECENT ELECTION IN HIS NEW GOVERNMENT (OR DOES HE HOLD A GRUDGE AGAINST POTENTIAL CHALLENGERS)?

1H. (C) HOW DOES BONGO REACT TO VIEWPOINTS THAT ARE DIFFERENT FROM HIS OWN? DOES HE LIKE TO GET INTO DEBATES WITH PEOPLE WHO DISAGREE WITH HIM? DOES HE PREFER TO LISTEN TO THEIR VIEWPOINT, THINK ON IT FOR A WHILE, AND COME BACK WITH A RESPONSE? DOES HE SURROUND HIMSELF WITH PEOPLE THAT HAVE A VARIETY OF VIEWPOINTS OR DOES HE PREFER "YES MEN"?

1I. (C) HOW IS BONGO VIEWED BY PROMINENT REGIONAL PLAYERS? WILL HE BE ABLE TO STEP INTO HIS FATHER'S SHOES AS A RESPECTED REGIONAL MEDIATOR, OR IS HE CONSIDERED A LIGHTWEIGHT BY HIS NEIGHBORS? IS HE STILL VERY PRO-US?

1J. (C) WHAT DOES BONGO LIKE TO DO IN HIS SPARE TIME? HOW RELIGIOUS IS HE? IS HE A DEDICATED FAMILY MAN?  
CLINTON